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## ***Press Release*** ***May 8, 2012***

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

### **OHIO ETHICS COMMISSION ISSUES ADVISORY OPINIONS**

At its meeting yesterday, the Ohio Ethics Commission issued two advisory opinions related to conflict of interest questions.

In the first advisory opinion, the Commission addressed a question from Robert W. Chase, Ph.D. Dr. Chase is a member of the Ohio Oil and Gas Commission and the creator of a limited liability corporation that provides services to landowner groups and associations whose members are interested in leasing properties to oil and gas producers for the development of wells. In the opinion, the Commission advised Dr. Chase that, as a member of the Oil and Gas Commission, he would be required to withdraw from consideration of any matter before the Commission involving an oil and gas producer, landowner, or landowner association with which he has negotiated or from which he has received or is owed payment. The opinion is available for review [here](#).

In the second opinion, the Commission opined on a scholarship fund established by a district board of education to annually benefit a district student. The recipient of the scholarship is selected by a committee of the superintendent, high school principal, guidance counselor, and one board member. The Commission determined that a board member's relative may compete for the scholarship provided the board member does not act, in any way, to secure the scholarship for his or her family member. The opinion is available for review [here](#).

In other business, the Commission reviewed Financial Disclosure statistics and complaint reports, including a staff report that the Commission has not received over 1,000 financial disclosure statements that were due to be filed by April 17, 2012. Commission Chairman Merom Brachman stated, "Public officials and employees should be reminded that failing to timely file disclosure statements is a disservice to the public as well as potentially a criminal offense." The Commission staff is sending notices to filers who have not yet filed their

statements. The Commission also received an update on Commission public outreach and communication efforts, and in executive session, the Commission heard a confidential report on complaints and pending investigations concerning alleged violations of the Ethics Law and related statutes.